Cooperation in science and technology with Russia

3518. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Russia have agreed to step up their decade old cooperation in Science and Technology in some new areas at a recently held Eighth Session in Moscow of the Joint Council for co-ordination and implementation of the Integrated Long Term Programme (ILTP) in Science and Technology;

(b) whether Indian Government have set up any technology development fund which could be used for bringing Russian technologies to the Indian market; and

(c) the details of the present Joint Research Projects (area-wise) covered by ILTP and the Russian Academy of Sciences and whether exploratory visits from each country are also undertaken?

THE MINISTER OF SCEINCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) India and Russia have agreed to step up their cooperation in Science & Technology and three new areas of co-operation, namely, Ocean Technology, Radio Electronics and Biomedical Scienes have been proposed during the recently hel Eighth session of Indo-Russian Joint Council for co-ordination and implementation of Integrated Long Term Programme of Cooperation in Science & Technology between India and Russia (ILTP).

(b) The fund for Technology Development and Application administered by the Technology Development Board provides financial assistance for adapting imported technologies, including those of Russian origin, for wider applications.

(c) Exploratory visits from each country are undertaken to concretise projects of mutual interest. 93 joint projects have been approved for continuation/inclusion in ILTP during the Eighth session of Joint Council. These projects are in the areas of Biotechnology and Immunology; Material Science and Technology (Engineering Materials); Materials and Technology for Electronics; Laser Science & Technology; Catalysis; Space Science & Technology; physics, Technology and Applications of Accelerator; Water Technology; Computer & Electronics; Mathematics; Theoretical and Applied mechanics; Earth Sciences; Radionphysics and Astrophysics; Ecology & Environment; Chemical Sciences; Biology.

Measures to develop information technology sector

3519. SHRI K.M. SAIFULAH: Will the Miniser of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a declining growth rate in the information technology market;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for slow growth rate; and

(c) the measures proposed to develop the information technology sector?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Meteorological office at Kandla Port

3520. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Meteorological office at the Kandla Port which experienced a devastating cyclone recently had no telephone connection and the only means of giving advance warning of impending storm was telegram which took about three hours to reach there;

(b) if so, the action taken against the officials responsible for such a serious dereliction of duty; and